

## WINTER RAIN.

Rain on the roof, and rain  
On the bare place of ground;  
To one a voice in vain;  
To one, a cheer and pain;  
The pledge of life again—

Rain on the sterile sea  
That lach no need of this,  
Nor keeps thy memory;  
Thou that teachest me  
The range of charity,  
John B. Babb, in Harper's Magazine

## A VICTIM TO DUTY

**I** MUST admit that I am somewhat ashamed to relate the beginning of our annual attachment.

To speak frankly, there is little room for proper self-respect or dignity in the confession that one fell in love at first sight with a miserable-looking creature, discovered slithering beneath a portiere in a black and stormy night; it may be evengaled, but it is hardly savors of pride for a man to share his existence with a poor, homeless and abandoned wretch who begged for a night's shelter and came from nobody knew where.

But a man's affections cannot always be set upon the high and mighty of this earth, nor can his esteem be given solely to those who have succeeded in obtaining a large share of its good things. Those attachments which are most talked of are very often the least pleasant, and it must be admitted that a lack of fortune is not necessarily a disadvantage, and, for the most part, the cruel tricks of fate take away nothing of parental merit.

Besides, I was regarded for my good deed, if it was one, by so rare and unbounded an admiration and gratitude that it deserves to be mentioned.

To begin at the beginning, then, I was on my way home from the club, where I had just lost at play a sum large enough to destroy all thoughts of merriment. On such occasions the world invariably becomes black and gloomy, my fellow-men appear greater fools than they actually are, women are but painted imitations of beauty and all cab drivers a pest to be ruthlessly treated.

All my best sentiments are clouded over for the time being, and in my wrath and despair I usually endeavor to make some one else as unhappy as I am myself. Accordingly, I remembered upon this particular occasion two beggars had hastily and tremblingly withdrawn from my footsteps as I stalked tragically homeward.

Suddenly, as I turned a poorly-lighted corner, I heard a low wailing cry on my side. I hastily turned my head the other way. Two steps further came a second cry, from the other side this time and more persistently and insistently.

"The devil fly away with you!" I thought irritably. "I suppose I can't decently leave the poor beggar to die just because I have lost a few piles of gold pieces."

I paused, feeling in my pockets for the few scattered coins that had survived the evening's shipwreck. The light from the glaring street lamp illuminated a single spot in the darkness, and instead of the beggar I had expected I saw a little, shivering, black dog, whose long, curly ears felt nearly to the ground and whose tail, wagging pitifully, betrayed the owner's misery better than any words.

"I was furious. To be sure, the dog is the friend of man in general, and I am the friend of the dog in particular. But to be stopped on such a night, when I was nobody's friend, either in general or particular, and just for a dog, was too much!"

"I started to walk on, when I felt his tongue, warm and moist, lick my hand. Doubtless he wished to thank me for having done so much as to pause and glance at him for an instant. It was a question of me, truly!"

I stopped again. His tail was wagging more and more earnestly, and his dark eyes looked imploringly into mine.

"Come," he was saying in his dog language, which I understood perfectly. "Come, now, don't be hard-hearted! Look, I am freezing cold and starving to death! I haven't a master, nor the smallest sign of a bone, nor anywhere to sleep. Take me home with you. I'll follow you and obey you and love you, for I'm a very good sort of dog. Oh, I'm sure that now you've seen how miserable I am, you can't go on and leave me to die. Honest, now, can you?"

He was right. I couldn't. It didn't take very long for me to tell him so, either. I stooped and picked him up, and the dog, understanding my language as well as I did, read his joy into my arms with his wet, cold face, nuzzling short little snuggles, which were all he had strength for.

"Come along, old man," I said, "you belong to my now."

He didn't make me repeat it twice, but rubbed his muzzle against my leg and trotted beside me happily.

"Aren't you rather hungry?" I inquired presently, looking at him.

"Hungry, yes, absolutely so," answered the tail, wagging furiously.

"Come on, then, we'll go and have some supper," I suggested.

He accepted my proposition with alacrity, and we stopped at a restaurant, where I ordered an excellent soup, full of all sorts of delicious delicacies, and put it down before my new friend. He was evidently satisfied, for he ate with an appetite which I secretly envied him.

While he ate I examined him. He was of a good build, certainly, for his limbs were well formed and shapely. Stolen from somebody's house, I supposed.

I decided that I would name him Nedjeh, which seemed to suit his dark looking, and I informed him of his new name. It took him some time to get used to it, but then I couldn't expect everything.

The next morning, after a night spent on a comfortable pillow, Nedjeh was as much at home in my bachelor quarters as if he had been born there. He examined all the corners, searched the

closets, watched my orderly polish my boots with every sign of approval and lastly, turned his attention to me and my bed. He regularly took possession of me and made himself completely at home.

After his own toilet had been made and the traces of his former misery removed, I presented him to the mess, where, with perfect self-possession, he accepted the pettings and attentions of my fellow officers.

"He would make an excellent military dog," said the Colonel, always an eminently practical man.

"Very true," said the Lieutenant-Colonel, who invariably agreed with his superior, as was proper.

"Let me have him, Wilhelm," said my plump, a captain in my own regiment. "I'll teach him the tricks of the trade. He'll be a fine mascot."

And, indeed, it was not long before the intelligent animal had learned his lesson well. He could give the alarm, signal the approach of the enemy, discover sentinels and spies and carry written messages, delivering them to the proper person. The Colonel was delighted with him, and he soon became the pet of the regiment.

There was one thing, however, that Nedjeh learned to hate very thoroughly, even in a painted picture, and that was the French uniform. In order to inspire him with a lasting sentiment of this nature, my friend, the captain, after fastening the dog in the stable, had dressed him up as a French officer and then pretended to strike him.

The experiment was a complete success, so much so that we had to hurry Nedjeh for fear of an accident, for Nedjeh was straining at his collar and growling. After that he evinced a great hatred for anything that recalled the uniform. Alas, it was this very sentiment that brought about his death.

One day in July I was walking with my friends on the outskirts of the city, admiring the rich crops that would soon be harvested. Nedjeh was with me on a leash.

From time to time he looked at me with a bored expression and yawned widely, his white teeth gleaming in his mouth. Seeing that I was bound to continue my walk, he followed at my heels with a resigned droop to his ears.

We stopped where a company of men were practicing marksmanship, and presently I felt a hard tug at the leash. Nedjeh, his eyes gleaming, his hair bristling, was standing on his hind legs barking madly.

In vain I tried to soothe him, patting and calling him pet names; he only continued to bark, hoarsely and chockingly, as he strained at his collar. At last he gave one long snap at the leash, which broke. Nedjeh tumbled over in the dust, but, recovering, dashed off at a wild run.

"Here, here, Nedjeh, come back," I commanded, but his ears were sealed. At some distance in the field were the painted models of a man, standing, kneeling and lying down, which served as targets for the men to shoot at. One of these was painted in the hated colors of the French uniform.

With a furious growl, Nedjeh rushed upon this latter, biting it and tearing it to pieces. The astonished soldier laid down his gun, and the onlookers, delighted with the spectacle, applauded boisterously.

"Bravo for the dog! Down with the Frenchman! Go ahead, Fido, cut him up!" they cried.

I hastened to catch hold again of the leash, but by the time I did so all that remained of the unfortunate model was a scattered pile of wooden splinters, torn and bitten. Nedjeh had satisfied his hatred, and, panting, he awaited my approach with a triumphant air. And, although I was obliged to pay for the destroyed target, I could not find any excuse for scolding my dog, who had done nothing but what he had been taught to consider his duty.

Now comes the sad epilogue of my story, which I here dedicate to all my readers who are fond of dogs. I should have wished to conclude in a less funeral strain, and portray Nedjeh as continuing the course of his exploits in a real encounter with the enemy where he would be covered with glory. But, alas, the poor animal died, though not upon the field of battle, yet none the less a victim. He was made to pay with his life for a too complete obedience to the lessons he had received.

He died during the night, poisoned by the colors he had absorbed while devouring the painted Frenchman. All my care was powerless to save him, and even the veterinary was obliged to confess himself baffled.

Poor little dog! We lamented him, you may be sure, and we buried him in a corner of the mess garden, in a quiet, sheltered spot, and over his grave we put the inscription:

**NEDJEH.**  
The Dog of the Regiment.  
A victim to his duty!

—Translated from the German for the New York Sun.

**"Crape Pullers" Do Well.**

"Crape pullers get a twenty per cent. commission," said the conservative realist. "That commission comes off the flowers, though," he added, smiling.

"What is a crape puller?"

"A crape puller is a man who, watching the death notices in the newspapers, calls on all the bereaved families and solicits orders for flowers for the funeral. We call such a man a crape puller contemptuously, pretending that he gets indoors by yanking the crape which hangs from the doorbell. A good many florists encourage crape pulling—in fact, live on it. They have booklets, illustrated with photographs, that tell all about the various designs they make. With these booklets the crape puller can solicit orders in an intelligible way.

"We conservatives don't encourage crape pulling. We consider it unsightly and indecorous in the first place, and in the second place, since the big commission to the puller comes not out of the pocket of the florist, but out of the pocket of the purchaser, we consider it a little dishonest. But death is always with us. Florists must live. The new guild of the crape pullers grows by hundreds weekly."—New York Press.

Shipping and keeping grapes in cork dust is quite an industry in some of the European grape districts.



## Good Roads

Working For Wide Tires.

**T**HE Midland Farmer prints an article showing how much more valuable wide tires are to farmers than the usual narrow tires found on most wagons.

The U. S. Bureau of Road Inquiry has been making a study of the width of tires prescribed by local and national authorities in various parts of the world. In France every freighting and market cart, instead of injuring the highway, improves it. Many of the tires are ten inches wide. In the four-wheeled vehicles in that country the rear axle is fourteen inches longer than the fore, and as a result the rear wheels run on a line about an inch outside the level rolled by the front wheels. After a few loaded wagons have passed over a road the highway looks as if a steam road roller had been at work. A national law in Germany prescribes that wagons heavily loaded must have tires not less than four inches wide. In Austria the minimum for similar vehicles is six and one-half inches; in Switzerland, six inches.

In a number of States in this country laws have been passed granting relative highway taxes to citizens who use on lumber wagons tires not less than three inches wide. On toll roads in Kentucky and several other States farmers hauling loads in wide-tired wagons are entitled to lower rates than those paid by the owners of narrow-tired vehicles.

At an experiment station it was demonstrated that it requires forty per cent. more power to draw a load on a wagon with one and one-half inch tires than on one with a three-inch tire. With a Baldwin dynamometer, careful tests were made with loaded wagons drawn over bluegrass sward. In a wagon weighing 1300 pounds it was found that a load of 3248 pounds could be drawn on wide tires with the same force required to move 2000 pounds on narrow tires. Moreover, the wide tires did not injure the turf, while the narrow ones cut through it. In some parts of the country pioneers in the use of wide tires have had to stand a good deal of ridicule. The manifest benefit to roads, however, soon changes public sentiment.

The president of a leading wagon manufacturing company states that the demand for wide tires is increasing every year. Another company in the same line of business conducted a series of tests, using a Fairbanks dynamometer carefully calibrated, and was convinced that on very hard roads the preference, so far as draft is concerned, is for narrow tires. In the effect upon the roads, however, wide tires have the advantage.

**Public Interest is Growing.**

To the mere politician the American people may at times appear to be asleep on important public questions, but when this condition exists it is safe to say that, instead of being indifferent, they are then more deeply than ever studying the pending problems of state.

This was never more true than in the matter of the Brownlow-Lattimer good roads proposition—beyond any doubt the most important measure, as applying to the whole body of American people, possible of suggestion in this day of our history. The man who lets himself believe that the question of National aid to highway improvement is not next to the hearts of the people, because vitally affecting their homes and all that pertains thereto, reckons without reason, and will one day himself awaken from mere speculation and discover that he is far behind the march of inevitable events. National aid to highway improvement is no dream. It stands upon practical reason and the true philosophy of government. No nation has ever enjoyed improved highways that did not build or help to build them. It is a recognized function of government everywhere in civilization except here, and is recognized by this Government in our outlying possessions. It will be so recognized as applying to the States if the people who already believe in it will get to work in earnest with their Senators and Representatives along the lines we have so many times indicated. The most effective way the citizen can find of impressing his wishes on the national law-makers is to write them earnest personal letters. Petitions of neighborhoods should also be sent in, to be presented to Congress. Public meetings should be held at which interchange of views can be had. Talking to one's neighbor tends to stir activity in the community.

**Collecting Spots.**

"No more lunch counters for me," said a man whose business makes it necessary for him to take his mid-day refreshment downtown. "Hereafter I want not only a table to sit down to, but a napkin—of cloth, not paper—large enough to cover my lap. Also I want a place to hang up my overcoat. This will doubtless make the restaurant a few cents more in the average, but my motives are purely those of economy. I discovered by means of saving money by an interview with my tailor. When I complained that a suit of clothes I recently got from him had speedily become spotted and stained on the collar and texture of the cloth the tailor told me the spots were due to the lunch counter habit, and after investigation I find he is right. Crowded up to a counter and without elbow room, you'll get spots on your clothes from dropping food, no matter how careful you are, and the brown-stained coat soon makes the clothes look old."—Philadelphia Record.

**One on the Conductor.**

An Irishman boarded a street car and handed the conductor a rather dilapidated-looking coin in payment of his fare. The conductor looked at the coin critically and handed it back. "That's tin," he said.

"Sure, I thought it was a fiver," answered the Irishman complacently, as he put the piece back in his pocket and produced a nickel.—Lippincott's.

## LIVING OUR RELIGION

OUR REGULAR SUNDAY SERMON

Service to God Implies an Intensely Practical Employment of Our Religious Faculties in Active Work.

Brooklyn, N. Y.—The Rev. Luther R. Drott, pastor of the United Congregational Church, preached Sunday morning on "The Indestructible Foundations." He took his texts from Psalms xli. 3: "If the foundations be destroyed, what can the righteous do?" and Hebrews xii. (revised version): "Faith is the assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen." II. Timothy i. 11 (revised version): "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

We seek the solid and safe—the things of the matter, the world. This is of supreme importance. Other things in this connection are relatively important. They are to be thought of, and appreciated, and even sought, found and kept. We must have them. Room for the active life of a growing belief is indispensable. A place for the sweet and sustaining comforts of the larger hope of humanity is desirable. The genuine of religion and the immortal love is ever to be regarded as more than a mere luxury of the inner life. Other work is important; but only so to a comparative degree.

Tedious and temporary is the task of the theologian. Unsatisfactory is the task of the creed-maker. Small is the task where "jarring sectaries" learn their selfish interest to discern, and unconsciously to become irrational in the name of religion. Spasmodic the task, and thankless the effort of the iconoclast. Feverish and painful, though somewhat sensational and imperious, is the task of the scientist. But all who are concerned about building character upon indestructible foundations and are actively engaged in this work, are realizing that which is of supreme importance: day by day, hour by hour, moment by moment, rises that "house not made with hands." Here we must toil with clear understanding, magnificent courage and untiring patience. Here we must be serious and certain.

It is a fine intimation and a hopeful intimation that, in some respects, at least, we are equal to the demands. The time has come when we must not be destroyed. Here we are serious enough when we are serious at all. We do not wish to be deceived with reference to these things. We deliberately prefer not to have our fountains of life poisoned. We object to the destruction of the foundations of belief. Error, falsehood, deceit are bad enough anywhere, but they do the most harm if they come into the fountains of life. He who poisons his body may only affect the place where his real life sojourns for a little while, but he who poisons his mind and his soul does me untold harm for eternity. He and I may never be able to make satisfactory repairs of some kinds of destructive work. Most of us think so. We do desire the solid and safe, the things of the matter, the world, which will stand the tests. "If the foundations be destroyed what can the righteous do?"

The strongest emphasis of our times, especially in matters of religion, is being placed upon the demand for the real. Notwithstanding the prevalent superficiality of our age, the quick sales of birth-rights for pottage, the heated and feverish, the ready, the ready of those who "glory in appearance and not in heart," notwithstanding the fact that we are living in "grievous times" when so many are "lovers of self, lovers of money, boastful, haughty, railers, disobedient to natural authorities, unlovely, without show, without self-control, fierce, lovers of good, traders, headstrong, puffed up, love of pleasure rather than lovers of God, holding a form of godliness but denying the power thereof," notwithstanding the fact that in the very church, itself, there are certain oscillatory movements calculated to perturb the life of some believers; notwithstanding all these things, and many more, still the underlying current toward the fuller and freer life, and the immediate and increasing demand in the religious life of the "assurance of things hoped for, the proving of things not seen," and for that certitude of knowledge which enables the individual believer to stand upon some indestructible foundation and say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day."

God is deeper than evil even in persons who do not profess to be good. The oscillations of belief may be permitted of God Himself, and end in doing much good for the common faith of Christendom. The unsettled condition of certain minds in the world born of the fact that there are some things which can not be shaken and must remain. God may be permitting the shaking up in order that we may have the removing of those things that are shaken, as of things that are made, that those things which can not be shaken may remain. Ours has been called an "age of doubt," but the evidence and proof of the claim are everywhere. "Our religious life lies more, and our practical life less, than it used to on the perilous edge." But does not the professor attempt to draw a distinction where no distinction belongs?

Is not our religious life, in fact and in fine, a practical life? Are not the most practical deeds in the world born of religious faith? Good life, good thoughts, good deeds, good living, good religion, whether they be done in this or that church, or bear no ecclesiastical stamp at all. Reality is at a premium in the religion of today. Let us believe that the demand for the real, the desire to investigate, the rewriting of old truths, the revising of some creed, the call for a new adjustment of things, do not invariably imply the existence of doubt and the destruction of the foundations of belief. If, indeed, this be doubt, then it is not the kind of doubt that we need. The things that destroy our foundations, these things destroy more than that we were on temporary and destructible foundations, when we should have had something better.

King calls our attention to the fact that "just as the acceptance of the principle of the conservation of forces called for a rewriting of physics—a new physics, or the theory of evolution for the rewriting of biology—a new biology, so, in the same sense, the acceptance of certain great convictions of our day calls for a rewriting of theology—a new theology." Call it a new theology if you will, but do not let prejudice blind you to truth, no matter from which direction truth may come. A thing is true not because its statement is old, nor is it false because its statement is new, but because it conforms to the great fact, or facts, for which it stands. The great fact, or facts, back of the truth and its statements,

do not change. Theological statements and systems may change. Some persons may become angry, others frightened, and still others foolishly and dippantly declare that they have no theology; but, in the meantime, theology remains the greatest science in the universe, even the science of God and divine things, based upon a revelation made of God, through Jesus Christ; and that science, itself as such, does not change.

God's foundations are firm amid all the mutations which mark the history of the human race; amid all the storms and shocks; amid all the disintegrating agencies; amid the rise and fall of empires; amid the birth, the growth, maturity, the old age and death of nations; amid things present and things to come, life and death, in spite of everything that may oppose, or assail, belief, character, hope, love, incorruptible life all may have perfectly indestructible foundations. What are some of these foundations? Religious experience; that is an experience of God in the soul of man is an indestructible foundation. Such experience was knowledge derived from fact and abiding in spiritual consciousness, "God is a spirit." Man is a spirit. There is possible contact and communion here. There is the possibility of the best knowledge in the world right here. Fact, evidence, proofs, knowledge, they are all here. Knowledge has found the proof; proof implies the existence of the evidence, evidence implies the existence and reality of the fact, while the primary datum abides in experience.

When a man has a religious experience then he has an indestructible foundation. He cannot then be morally ignorant. He knows something. That which a man sees may deceive him. That which he hears may not always be so, but that which he knows, he knows, and no man can take it from him. He is upon a foundation which will not be destroyed. Then with minds and hearts in an establishing the fact in dealing in the great unseen realities which are always more than the seen, in giving the "assurance of things hoped for, in proving things not seen." A man cannot subject such an experience to the test of the natural senses. It is too large for such a test as that, but he knows he is right, and he knows he is upon an indestructible foundation. It is not only our knowledge of God. There is another indestructible foundation in His knowledge of us. It is His knowledge of us. "Howbeit the firm foundation of God standeth having this seal, The Lord knoweth them that are His." He cannot mistake. We could not deceive Him, even though we might deceive others, or be deceived by what we might suppose to be experience, even religious experience, even though we might deceive ourselves. God knows. Of this we are certain. He knows us perfectly. If we are His, He knows us. If we are not His, by the generation of the Holy Spirit, we may become His. He will know. He will cause us to know it. "The secret of the Lord is with them that fear Him." He desires it to be there.

Every man has just as much right to know that he is alive spiritually as he does that he is alive physically. This knowledge is brought to him by the witness of God within him. Thus it is that we go deeper than religious experience and find another foundation in that firm foundation of God—His knowledge of us. Jesus Christ is another foundation. He is our chief cornerstone. The ideals He holds, His simplicity, His grandeur, His humility, His Delity, His faith, His love, His life—all combine to make Him the perfectly comparable one among all religious figures, and while a certain profound sense Christ and Christianity stand apart and inseparable, there is still a sense in which Christ, as an individual, is more than Christianity. And the sun is more than the multitudinous rays which fall upon our little portion of the earth; Christ is more than Christianity, as the thinker is more than his thought, as life is more than that which embodies life. We build, as Christians, not upon this or that creed which Christ, but upon Christ Himself. He is our indestructible foundation. Our faith rests at last, not in a creed, though we should all have a creed, and not in a book, though we can never do without the Bible, but in a person, and that person, Christ, places our lives upon God.

Let us resolve to go deeper, deeper. If we are at all unsettled in matters of religion, we should not despair. We can find the solid and the safe. Let us build there. Let us build according to the plans of the Supreme Architect of the universe. Let all build until humanity shall become a temple complete, filled with the light and music of Heaven, filled with the life of God; and then, even though the storm may come, and the last night fall about us, it will only be the servant of a new day, and we shall be able to say, "I know whom I have believed, and am persuaded that He is able to guard that which I have committed unto Him against that day." Our foundations cannot be destroyed. Thank God.

**The Talent That Multiplies.**

God blesses you that you may be a blessing to others. Then He blesses you also a second time in being a blessing to others. It is the talent that is used that multiplies.

Receiving, unless one gives in turn, makes one full and proud and selfish. Give out the best of your life in the Master's name for the good of others, and a hand to every one who needs. Be ready to serve at any cost those who require your service. Seek to be a blessing to every one who comes for a moment under your influence. This is to be angel-like. It is to be God-like. It is to be Christ-like. We are in this world to be useful. God wants to pass His gifts and blessings to us, and to every one who needs. Be ready to serve at any cost those who require your service. Seek to be a blessing to every one who comes for a moment under your influence. This is to be angel-like. It is to be God-like. It is to be Christ-like. We are in this world to be useful. God wants to pass His gifts and blessings to us, and to every one who needs. Be ready to serve at any cost those who require your service. Seek to be a blessing to every one who comes for a moment under your influence. 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